



# Proposed Land Claims Settlement Between New York State and the Akwesasne Mohawks



## Ratification OF THE AKWESASNE MOHAWK LAND CLAIMS

### Negotiated Settlement through Community Involvement

**F**or 23 years the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe has pursued a resolution to our community's land claims with the State of New York. Throughout this time, the Tribal Council has remained firmly committed to seeking a mutually agreeable and binding resolution that benefits the Akwesasne community, our neighboring towns and villages, Franklin and St. Lawrence Counties, and the State. We're confident the proposed land claims settlement accomplishes each of these objectives.

Since July 2003, the St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Council, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and the Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs have worked together in partnership and unity to develop terms that could potentially settle our land claims. The process marks the first time in decades our community's leadership have worked cooperatively in seeking a solution to a major issue facing Akwesasne and Northern New York. In addition, for the first time in the history of our land claims, a community education and a survey component that included 1,775 Akwesasne residents served as an integral part of the process. These extensive measures have enabled us to successfully conclude negotiations in good faith with the State.

In October 2004, a proposed settlement agreement was reached with the State and each council proceeded to seek its ratification by their membership. On November 27<sup>th</sup>, the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe and the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne conducted a community referendum and approved the terms, by a combined margin of more than 2 to 1. Additionally, on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2005 leaders of the Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs reached consen-

sus in favor of the settlement agreement. These strong results gave the Akwesasne leadership clear direction and a mandate to proceed to the next steps for final resolution of our land claims.

The favorable referendum results were due to the comprehensive and factual information that was shared with our community members as the land claims process progressed. Informational sessions were conducted with families, interest groups and individuals. Our community ratification process also involved direct mailings of land claims information, including a copy of the full settlement offer, to every household in Akwesasne. The proposed settlement was also mailed to tribal members living away from our community. This was followed up with brochures, radio announcements and weekly talk shows, tribal meetings, one-on-one discussions and other means to inform our community members of the proposed settlement terms. All these efforts enabled eligible voters to make an informed decision on referendum day in favor of the settlement terms.

The February 1<sup>st</sup> signing between Governor Pataki and the Akwesasne leadership is the direct result of cooperative efforts by all the parties and their desire to reach a mutually beneficial settlement. Our land claim settlement now requires the ratification of the State Legislature and U.S. Congress through legislation. With this in mind, we provide you with the following information that is similar to what was provided to our community, local towns and counties. We encourage you to review the contents and hope it will assist you in making a decision in support of legislation ratifying the agreement.



(l to r): Power Authority Executive Vice President David Blabey, St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Chief Margaret Terrance, SMRT Chief James W. Ransom, New York Governor George Pataki, SRMT Chief Barbara A. Lazore, Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs Representative Howard "Iothore" Thompson and Mohawk Council of Akwesasne Grand Chief Angela "Wahienhawi" Barnes.



Proposed  
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Between  
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# Briefing **NOTES**



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**Issue:** A negotiated settlement proposes a mutually beneficial and binding resolution to a 23-year-old case for all Akwesasne Mohawk land claims within New York State.

**Background:** In the early-1800s, New York State purchased approximately 15,000 acres of land from the Akwesasne Mohawks without federal approval and in violation of the 1792 Non-Intercourse Act. In 1989 the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe filed suit pursuant to HR-5494, "Ancient Indian Land Claims Settlement Act," seeking the return of lands. Since July 2003, the St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Council, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs have worked together and ensured community consultation in developing land claim settlement terms through negotiations with the State.

The major items of the land claims settlement are:

**A. Release Language:** Releases and discharges the State, its political subdivisions, its citizens, inhabitants, the Power Authority of the State of New York and any successors from any claim which could be brought forward under federal and state law at the time of the execution of the settlement agreement.

**B. Monetary Compensation:** \$100 million in compensation to be paid over a specified period by New York State and the Power Authority. (The Power Authority will pay \$2 million annually for 35 years-\$70 million. The State will pay \$6 million annually for 5 years, \$30 million total, beginning January 1st, 2008.)

**C. Land and Islands:** 14,778 total acres will eventually be returned, with 13,463 acres to be purchased from willing sellers or by voluntary transfer. A 215-acre parcel known as Massena Point and two islands, Long Sault and Croil, will transfer upon the effective date of the settlement. Mohawk claims to the one-mile square in Massena and Fort Covington will be released, as well as for the Grasse River meadows and Barnhart Island.

**D. Local Governments:** The State will compensate St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties and the towns located in the land claims areas with the sum of two million dollars, compounded at two percent each year, for perpetuity in dealing with the fiscal impacts of the settlement agreement. The State shall also reimburse the counties amounts due from unpaid real property taxes provided the local governments consent to the dismissal of all foreclosure actions brought against lands owned by Akwesasne Mohawks.

**E. New York Power Authority:**

Akwesasne Mohawks will withdraw challenges to NYPA's license from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and will not be entitled to any interest or right to the license, and annual charges, or any ownership of the St Lawrence-FDR Power Project. 9 megawatts of electricity will be provided to the Akwesasne community for as long as the Power Project exists.

**F. Education:** Mohawks enrolled at Akwesasne, who qualify for admission to a campus of the State University of New York, will not be required to pay tuition or mandatory fees.

**G. Settlement Legislation:** The settlement agreement will take effect upon the enactment of federal and state legislation deeming it mutually acceptable to the parties. The resolution of disputes between or among the parties will be provided through arbitration and subject to enforcement in the United States District Court. Federal court jurisdiction will be exercised over actions and decisions issued through arbitration proceedings.

**Current Status:** The proposed settlement has been approved by the membership of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, governing body on Akwesasne's American portion, by 748 to 387 voting in favor of the agreement. Membership of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, governing body on Akwesasne's Canadian portion, also approved the agreement in a vote of 300 to 200 in favor. The Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs, Akwesasne's traditional governing body, reached consensus to approve the settlement terms.

**Options:** Court litigation to resolve the land claims case will prolong the uncertainty of this issue for an estimated 15 to 20 years. A court settlement of the case will result in the terms of the proposed settlement agreement to not be implemented. The unavailability of benefits secured through a negotiated agreement will adversely impact surrounding communities by limiting economic development opportunities.

**Recommendations:** Commitment to working closely with the Akwesasne Mohawks to achieve a mutually agreeable settlement of a 23-year-old land claims case that will result in the enactment of State legislation to ratify the agreement.

Prepared by: Public  
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**Land Claims Settlement**  
Between  
**New York State and the Akwesasne Mohawks**



# Settlement **TERMS**

Subject to the authorization and ratification by an Act of Congress, this Agreement of Compromise and settlement ("Agreement") is made this 1<sup>st</sup> day of February, 2005, between the Akwesasne Mohawks and the State of New York, *et al.*

## I. Understanding

1. It is the understanding of the State of New York (the "State") and its political subdivisions, including, without limitation, the counties of St. Lawrence and Franklin ("Counties"), and the Power Authority of the State of New York ("Power Authority") (collectively referred to herein as the "State Parties"), and the tribal plaintiffs in Civil Action Nos. 82-CV-783, 82-CV-1114, and 89-CV-829 (the "Akwesasne Mohawks") (collectively, the "Parties") that it would be mutually beneficial to resolve all Akwesasne Mohawk land claims within New York State.

2. All references to state or federal law shall mean the laws as they exist and are interpreted by state or federal courts from time to time and shall include all future changes, amendments and revisions thereto unless otherwise stated.

## II. Scope of the Agreement:

**A. RELEASE:** Except as otherwise provided in this settlement agreement, the Akwesasne Mohawks hereby release and discharge the State, its political subdivisions, its citizens, inhabitants, the Power Authority and any successors in interest, of and from any claim which could be brought under federal or state law at the time of the execution of this settlement agreement to land or interest in land in New York State.

1. Nothing in this agreement shall alter or diminish any treaty, statutory, contractual or aboriginal hunting, harvesting, fishing, trapping and/or gathering rights that the Akwesasne Mohawks may have; provided, however, that nothing in this settlement agreement shall be construed as recognizing the existence of, creating or conferring any such rights.

## B. MONETARY SETTLEMENT

1. The State shall pay the sum of thirty million dollars, to be paid in five equal annual payments commencing

January 1, 2008. Further, the Parties agree that the Power Authority shall pay the sum of two million dollars per year for thirty-five years commencing within ninety days of the effective date of this settlement agreement. The payments shall be exempt from federal or state taxation.

2. None of the payments, funds, assets or distributions set forth herein and none of the interest earned or income received on the same shall be subject to levy, execution, forfeiture, garnishment, lien, encumbrance, or seizure. None of the payments, funds, assets or distributions set forth herein and none of the interest earned or income received on the same shall at any time be used as a basis for denying or reducing funds to the Akwesasne Mohawks under any Federal, State or local program nor shall the same be deemed to be taxable, and such transfers shall not be deemed taxable events.

## C. LAND

1. Upon the effective date of the settlement, the Akwesasne Mohawks may acquire the following lands by purchase of parcels from willing sellers at fair market value or by voluntary transfer:

- Land located in the Hogansburg-Bombay Triangle, as shown as "A" on the annexed map.
- Up to 1300 acres of land located in the area in the Town of Fort Covington marked as "B" on the annexed map. The Akwesasne Mohawks may acquire additional lands beyond the 1300 acres in area "B" either by purchase from willing sellers or by transfer from Akwesasne Mohawks or by voluntary transfer, provided, however, that before any such acquisition, the Akwesasne Mohawks will obtain the prior written concurrence of both the County and Town in which such land is located, such concurrence which shall not be unreasonably withheld. When such land is acquired, it shall have the same status and be subject to administration by the Akwesasne Mohawks as set forth in C.5 of this settlement agreement.
- Land located in the areas in the Town of Brasher marked as "C" on the annexed map, excepting the land on which the Power Authority transmission lines are located.
- Land located in the area in the Town of Massena marked as "D" on the attached map, up to the Racquette River.

2. The Akwesasne Mohawks will be notified of all lands in the areas mentioned above which may come up for



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Proposed  
**Land Claims Settlement**  
Between  
**New York State and the Akwesasne Mohawks**



# Settlement **TERMS**



sale or auction as a result of a foreclosure by the State or County or other political subdivisions and shall be granted status as an “interested party” pursuant to section 1126 of the Real Property Tax Law of the State of New York. Further, the Akwesasne Mohawks will be given a right of first refusal to purchase, at the appraisal value (as set forth in the most recent tax assessment), lands in the areas mentioned above that have passed to the state by escheat pursuant to the Abandoned Property Law of the State of New York.

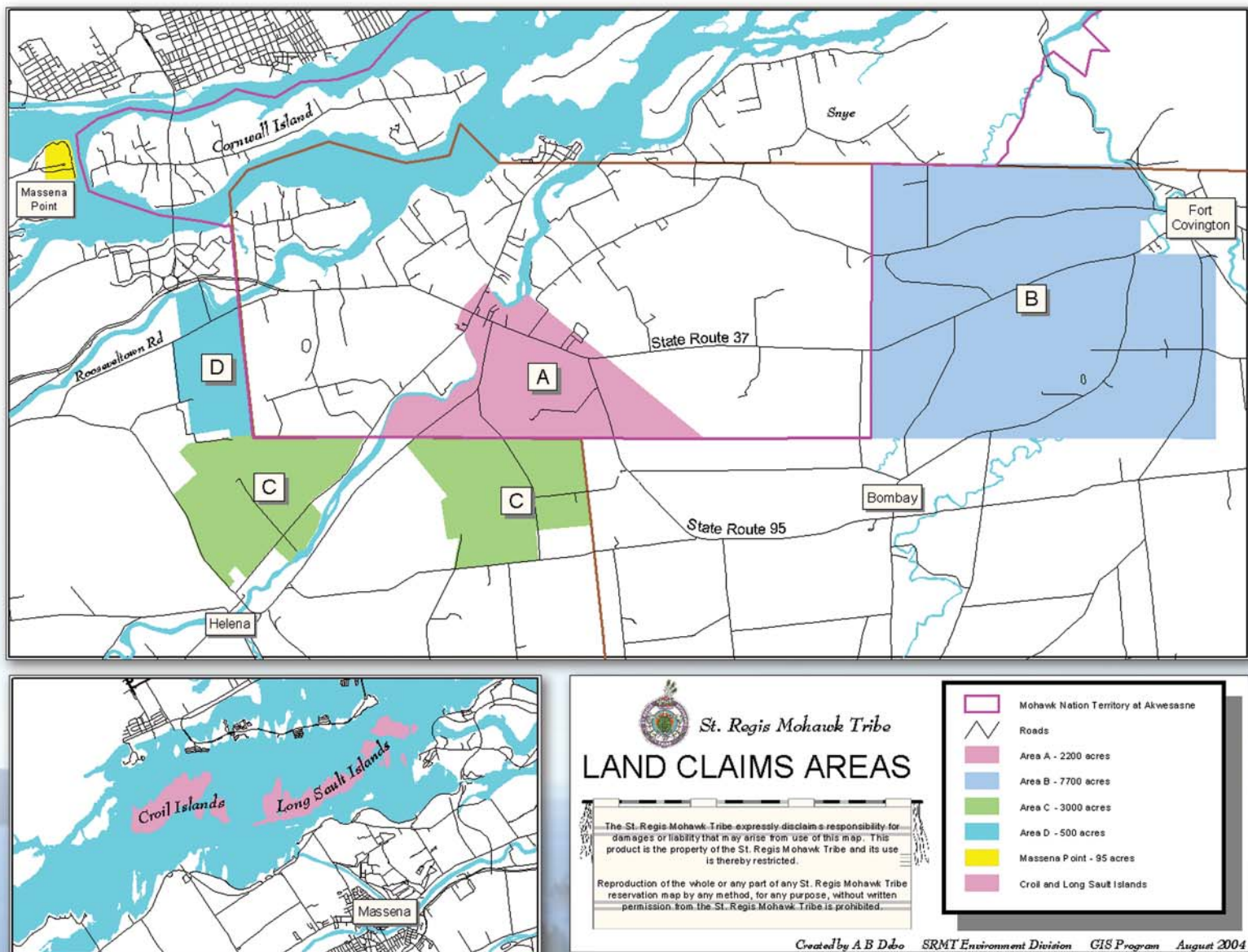
3. In addition, the Power Authority shall convey Long Sault and Croil Islands above the normal average surface elevation, defined as elevation 241 feet (United States Lake Survey 1935), as depicted in the attached maps, to the Akwesasne Mohawks; provided, however, that prior to such conveyance those islands shall have been removed from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (“FERC”) boundary of the Power Authority’s St. Lawrence FDR Project (“Project”), which removal shall be provided for by the federal legislation ratifying this settlement agreement. The Akwesasne Mohawks shall grant to the Power Authority a flooding easement [the terms of which will be agreed to by the Power Authority and the Akwesasne Mohawks and attached as an Exhibit to this settlement agreement] up to elevation 250 feet for potential high water levels. The Power Authority and the Akwesasne Mohawks shall identify mutually agreeable sites on Bamhart Island and/or within Project boundaries to locate boat launching and marina docking facilities for development by the Akwesasne Mohawks to facilitate access to Croil and Long Sault Islands. The Power Authority shall issue permits to the Akwesasne Mohawks for the construction and maintenance of such facilities upon receipt of any necessary approval by FERC and any other appropriate federal or state agency. The Akwesasne Mohawks agree that they will not use or develop the Islands in a manner that interferes

with the operation of the St. Lawrence Seaway or the Project.

4. The Power Authority shall also convey to the Akwesasne Mohawks a 215-acre parcel on Massena Point as depicted in the attached map; provided, however, that prior to such conveyance such parcel shall have been removed from the FERC boundary of the Project, which removal shall be provided for by the federal legislation ratifying this settlement agreement. The Akwesasne Mohawks shall grant to the Power Authority a flooding easement [the terms of which will be agreed to by the Power Authority and the Akwesasne Mohawks and attached as an Exhibit to this settlement agreement] up to elevation 183 ft. for potential high water levels. The Power Authority shall maintain at its own expense and provide for the Akwesasne Mohawks access to Massena Point from the existing roads controlled by the Power Authority within the new Project boundary.

5. Except as otherwise provided herein, when such lands are purchased from willing sellers or conveyed by the Power Authority or by the county of St. Lawrence or Franklin to the Akwesasne Mohawks, or conveyed to the Akwesasne Mohawks by voluntary transfer, in accordance with the provisions of this Section C, they shall become Indian reservation land and be considered Indian country as a matter of federal law, will be subject to federal restrictions against alienation and will enjoy all of the rights and immunities, specifically including but not limited to tax immunities, attributed to Indian Reservation lands and Indian country. Lands that are conveyed to or acquired by the Akwesasne Mohawks will be held and administered in the same manner as the current reservation lands, and according to an agreement to be negotiated among the Akwesasne Mohawks.

6. Lands acquired, whether individually or collectively, by





Proposed  
**Land Claims Settlement**  
Between  
**New York State and the Akwesasne Mohawks**



# Settlement **TERMS**



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the Akwesasne Mohawks outside of the areas described in the preceding paragraphs of this section shall be held in fee by the Akwesasne Mohawks unless acquired under Part 151 or other federal legal procedures.

7. The Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation shall waive any vehicle use fee for admission by any Akwesasne Mohawk to Robert Moses State Park.

8. The Akwesasne Mohawks will have the opportunity to bid for the purchase of lands on Bamhart Island (such as parks, surplus lands, etc.), if the State should decide to sell it.

9. The State agrees, within 60 days of the effective date of this settlement agreement, to use its best efforts to provide the Akwesasne Mohawks with a list of public and cultural facilities, including churches, cemeteries and parks (collectively “Cultural/Recreation Areas”) that may become landlocked by lands which gain reservation status and/or are otherwise conveyed as a result of this settlement. The general public shall continue to have access to all such Cultural/Recreation Areas.

10. The State agrees, within 60 days of the effective date of this settlement agreement to use its best efforts to provide the Akwesasne Mohawks with an inventory listing of utility and highway easements and rights of way on the conveyed lands. The Parties agree that all valid utility, railroad and highway easements and rights of way shall continue to be valid and of full force and effect, provided that any rights to future payments or benefits to which the original grantor of the easement(s) or right(s) of way would otherwise be entitled to inures to the Akwesasne Mohawks, as successors to such grantors.

11. Akwesasne Mohawks shall continue to have access over publicly-owned land to public and cultural facilities located on publicly-owned lands off the reservation, such as churches and cemeteries and other spiritual and cultural sites that are on or landlocked by non-Reservation lands. Provided, however, that nothing in this agreement shall limit, abridge or alter the Akwesasne Mohawks ability to access such properties on private lands, pursuant to agreement with the landowner(s).

12. The Akwesasne Mohawks currently use standard building codes that are at least as stringent as those contained in the International Building Codes when constructing public facilities. The Akwesasne Mohawks agree to continue to utilize these standards, as amended from time to time.

13. The Akwesasne Mohawks may adopt and enforce environmental regulations on the Reservation at least as strict as those contained in federal law and regulations (which federal law and regulations shall continue to apply to the same extent as on any other land that is Indian country). If the Akwesasne Mohawks adopt and enforce on the Reservation more stringent environmental laws and regulations, then such more stringent regulations shall apply only on the Reservation and not to non-Reservation lands.

14. In making decisions as to the development and use of reservation land, the Akwesasne Mohawks shall give consideration to (i) the protection of established or planned residential areas from any use or development that would adversely affect residential living outside the Reservation, and (ii) protection of the health, safety and welfare of the communities contiguous to the Reservation. Prior to developing or otherwise altering the existing use of land within five hundred feet of the Reservation boundary, the Akwesasne Mohawks shall consult with local officials about the potential effect of such use on the adjacent community.

15. In making decisions as to the development and use of non-reservation land, local officials will give consideration to (i) the protection of established or planned residential areas from any use or development that would adversely affect residential living within the Reservation, and (ii) protection of the health, safety and welfare of the Reservation community adjacent to the Reservation. Prior to developing or otherwise altering the existing use of land within five hundred [500] feet of the Reservation boundary, the local officials will consult with Mohawk officials about the potential effect of such use on the Reservation.

## D. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ISSUES

1. Land that gains reservation status as a result of this settlement shall be exempt from local real property taxes. All such land within the areas marked as “A”, “B”, “C”, or “D” on the attached map shall remain subject to local real property taxes and other laws effective within the State until they are acquired by the Akwesasne Mohawks by purchase from a willing seller or by voluntary transfer to the Akwesasne Mohawks.

2. Beginning January 1, 2008, and for so long as prescribed by the state settlement legislation, the state shall annually pay the sum of two million dollars (which sum, as compounded, shall be increased by two percent each year, beginning with the second annual payment made hereunder) to the counties of St. Lawrence and Franklin to be distributed pursuant to an agreement reached between the state, the counties of St. Lawrence and Franklin and the towns therein that include lands that may be acquired by the Akwesasne Mohawks under this Agreement.

3. In the event that real property owned by the Akwesasne Mohawks, or part or individual member thereof, as of the effective date of this act has been removed from the real property tax rolls of either the county of St. Lawrence or Franklin, or otherwise resulted in unpaid real property taxes, then the State shall pay to such counties, in ten equal annual installments beginning January 1, 2008, such amounts as are necessary to reimburse the counties and the affected towns, villages and other taxing districts in such counties for the principal amount (as verified by the state office of real property services) of any such unpaid real property taxes exclusive of any interest or penalties imposed thereon; provided, however, that, as soon as practicable and upon receipt of the first annual payment of monies to the counties, the local governments shall consent to the dismissal with prejudice of all foreclosure actions brought against lands owned by Akwesasne Mohawks for failure to pay real property tax and all taxes owed shall be forgiven, and further, if such foreclosure has occurred and title has passed to Franklin and/or St. Lawrence County, then the county or counties shall transfer to the Akwesasne Mohawks the title to any lands which have been transferred by a member or members to the Akwesasne Mohawks, Additionally, in the event that real property acquired as a result of this Agreement by the Akwesasne Mohawks shall be removed from the real property tax rolls of either the county of St. Lawrence or Franklin, then the State shall pay to the counties such amounts as are necessary to hold each of the counties of St. Lawrence and Franklin and their affected towns, villages and other taxing districts harmless against any losses in real property taxes (based upon the assessed value at the time of acquisition of such land by the Akwesasne Mohawks and the tax rate or rates applicable from time to time, as verified by the state office of real property services) resulting from such removal of such real property from the county tax base.

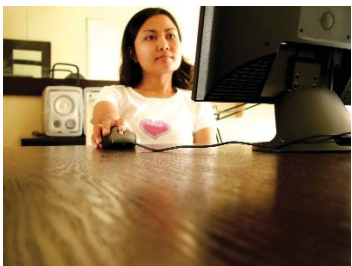
4. Local governments shall be eligible to receive all benefits provided by the United States to local governments impacted by Indian trust lands in other Indian land claim



Proposed  
Land Claims Settlement  
Between  
New York State and the Akwesasne Mohawks



# Settlement TERMS



settlements, including but not limited to payments in lieu of real property taxes for parcels removed from the local tax rolls as a result of the settlement.

**E. NEW YORK POWER AUTHORITY ISSUES**

1. The Power Authority shall make available within 90 days after the effective date of this settlement up to nine (9) megawatts (MW) of power and energy for sale to the power corporation established by the Akwesasne Mohawks which power will be resold for the sole purpose of serving, without mark-up, the load of the Akwesasne Mohawks Reservation. This power shall be available to the Akwesasne Mohawks at the Power Authority’s lowest rate for St. Lawrence-FDR Project power and energy (i.e., the rate charged to preference power customers). The Power Authority shall deliver and sell the power and associated energy to the Akwesasne Mohawks at the Delivery Point at the Project Switch-Yard. It shall be the Akwesasne Mohawks responsibility to arrange for the transmission and distribution, including all charges imposed by the New York Independent System Operator or any Successor. In order to ensure that this power and energy is made available to the Akwesasne Mohawks beyond the expiration of the current license for the Project, and is binding upon any and all future owners and operators of the Project, the Power Authority shall seek FERC approval of the power sales agreement with the Akwesasne Mohawks pursuant to Section 22 of the Federal Power Act.

2. Nothing in this settlement agreement shall affect or otherwise remove those Mohawk land owners or Mohawk-owned businesses currently on the Massena Electric grid, unless mutually agreed upon.

3. Upon the effective date of this settlement agreement the Akwesasne Mohawks shall: (a) withdraw with prejudice all pending, and refrain from initiating any new, rehearing or reconsideration requests, petitions for judicial review, or any other administrative or judicial challenge to FERC’s October 23, 2003, order issuing the Power Authority a new license for the Project, or any subsequent orders on rehearing or reconsideration of that October 23, 2003 order; and (b) participate as a concurring party under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, with the Power Authority’s efforts to develop an Historic Properties Management Plan under the Programmatic Agreement and the new license for the Project.

4. The Parties agree that the conveyance or acquisition of lands described in Section II of this settlement agreement does not entitle the Akwesasne Mohawks or their members to: (a) any interest or right to the license for said Project; (b) any annual charges or other payments relating to ownership and operation of said Project or (c) any ownership, use, control or jurisdiction over the lands, waters, or operation of said Project.

5. In order to ensure that certain provisions of the Federal Power Act regarding federal reservations are not implicated at the Project, the Parties agree that the federal legislation ratifying this settlement agreement shall expressly: (a) direct FERC to permanently remove from the Project boundary all lands described in Section II of this settlement agreement; (b) direct FERC to remove Article 418 from the Project’s license.

**F. EDUCATION**

Mohawks enrolled at Akwesasne who qualify for admission to any New York State institution of higher learning shall, upon their timely application for admission, be entitled to enroll in and attend such institution without payment of tuition or mandatory fees. The benefits provided to any Mohawk under this section shall not at any time affect the eligibility of the Akwesasne Mohawks or be used as a basis for denying or reducing funds to the Akwesasne Mohawks under any Federal, State, or local program. Benefits provided under this section may be used, where appropriate, as matching funds for Federal grants or loans.

**G. SETTLEMENT LEGISLATION**

The land claim settlement described herein shall take effect upon the enactment of such federal and state legislation as is mutually acceptable to the Parties to effectuate the terms of this settlement agreement.

**H. DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

In the event of any dispute, claim, question, or disagreement (collectively referred to hereafter as “claim”) between the Akwesasne Mohawks and any of the State Parties, arising from or relating to this Settlement Agreement, or any of the terms therein, the Federal Settlement Legislation, or the State Settlement Legislation, the Akwesasne Mohawks and the State Parties shall use their best efforts to settle the claim. To this effect, any of the Akwesasne Mohawks or any of the





Proposed  
**Land Claims Settlement**  
Between  
**New York State and the Akwesasne Mohawks**



# Settlement **TERMS**



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Library and Museum

State Parties may provide written notice of a claim to the other and shall then meet within fourteen (14) days to negotiate in good faith and attempt to reach a just and equitable solution satisfactory to each party to the claim. If such a solution is not achieved within a period of thirty (30) days after such meeting, or the parties to the claim fail to meet and thirty (30) days pass after the written notice of a claim is received then, upon notice by the unsatisfied party to the other parties to the claim, the claim shall be finally settled by arbitration.

The notice shall specify with particularity the nature of the claim, the particular provision of this Settlement Agreement, or any of the terms therein, the Federal Settlement Legislation, or the State Settlement Legislation at issue and the proposed relief sought by the party demanding arbitration.

If the Akwesasne Mohawks and the State Parties so agree, a single arbitrator may be selected. In the event of a disagreement as to the arbitrator to be selected, each party to the claim shall select one arbitrator and the two arbitrators shall select the third. The arbitrators shall be selected within (30) days of the notice of arbitration set forth above. Arbitration under this Section shall be conducted in accordance with the International Rules of the American Arbitration Association.

The cost of the arbitration shall be shared equally by the parties to the claim, but each party shall bear its own costs and attorneys' fees associated with its participation in the arbitration. All arbitration proceedings shall be conducted to expedite resolution of the claim and minimize cost to the participants.

Among other things, the federal legislation ratifying this settlement agreement shall provide for resolution of disputes between or among the Parties by arbitration, with arbitration decisions to be subject to enforcement and/or vacatur in the United States District Court in accordance with the Federal Arbitration Act, 9 U.S.C. §1, et seq. and provide for federal court jurisdiction over actions brought to enforce or review decisions issued in such arbitration proceedings. Any Party may bring an action in the United States District Court of the Northern District of New York to compel arbitration under the arbitration provisions of this Settlement Agreement, to confirm, vacate, modify or correct a decision of the arbitrator in any arbitration provided for by this Settlement Agreement, or to enforce any judgment entered by the court with respect to any such arbitration, and the Parties each hereby expressly consent to the jurisdiction and venue in such court over such actions. Such actions in the District Court shall be governed by the Federal

Arbitration Act, 9 U.S.C. § 1 et seq. In the event the United States District Court issues a final determination that it lacks jurisdiction over any such action, then any Party may bring such action in the Supreme Court of the State of New York and any such action will be governed by the provisions of Article 75 of the New York CPLR. The Parties agree to waive their respective sovereign immunity solely and exclusively for the strictly limited purpose of arbitration brought under the arbitration provisions of this Settlement Agreement and court actions with respect thereto and for no other purpose. It is further understood and agreed that the Akwesasne Mohawks specifically and expressly waive their tribal sovereign immunity from suit with respect to such arbitrations and court actions and the State specifically and expressly waives its sovereign immunity, including its 11th Amendment immunity, from suit with respect to such arbitrations and court actions. The Akwesasne Mohawks and State Parties shall also waive the defenses of exhaustion of administrative or tribal remedies with respect to any such arbitrations or court actions.

## **I. EXECUTION IN MULTIPLE COUNTERPARTS**

This Agreement may be executed and delivered in one or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, and all of which taken together shall constitute one and the same instrument. The Parties agree that an executed counterpart of this Agreement transmitted by facsimile shall be deemed an original. Any such counterpart signature pages may be attached to the body of this Agreement to form one complete integrated whole. By signing this Agreement, the signatories represent that they are authorized to execute this Agreement on behalf of the Parties, respectively. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have hereunto set their hands and seals.

St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Council

Mohawk Council of Akwesasne

Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs

Governor of the State of New York

Power Authority of the State of New York

County of St. Lawrence

County of Franklin



Photo credit by: Public Information Office, St. Regis Mohawk Tribe



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**Land Claims Settlement**  
Between  
**New York State and the Akwesasne Mohawks**



# Fact SHEET



## Akwesasne Mohawks

### Land and Islands

- 13,463 acres of land will be purchased from willing sellers or by voluteer transfer.
- Long Sault and Croil Islands will be returned
- 215-acre parcel known as Massena Point will be transferred to Akwesasne Mohawks.  
(Total acreage of 14,778 acres)

### Akwesasne Mohawk Rights

- Protection of aboriginal rights to hunt, fish, trap and gather beyond our territory.
- Right to enact our own building codes.
- Right to enact our own environmental codes.
- Right to purchase additional lands after the settlement using federal processes.

### Monetary Compensation

- \$6 million per year over 5 years from the State.
- \$2 million per year over 35 years from NYPA.  
(Total monetary compensation of \$100 million)

### Other Key Points

- 9 megawatts of low-cost power from NYPA for as long as the Power Project exists.
- Foreclosures against Akwesasne Mohawks in the land claim area will be dismissed.
- Free tuition at any SUNY school.
- Vehicle fees waived at Robert Moses State Park.
- Access to the Islands will be provided.
- Future claim should federal law change.



## New York State

### Land Claims

- Claims to the one-mile square in Massena and Fort Covington will be released.
- Claims to Grasse River meadows will be released.
- Claims to Barnhart Island will be released.

### Local Governments

- The State will compensate St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties and the towns located in the land claims areas with the sum of two million dollars, compounded at two percent each year, for perpetuity in dealing with the fiscal impacts of the settlement agreement. The State shall also reimburse the counties amounts due from unpaid real property taxes provided the local governments consent to the dismissal of all foreclosure actions brought against lands owned by Akwesasne Mohawks.
- Local governments will be eligible to receive all benefits provided by the United States to local governments impacted by Indian trust lands in other Indian land claim settlements.

### New York Power Authority

- The Akwesasne Mohawks will withdraw with prejudice challenges to NYPA's license from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.
- Akwesasne Mohawks will not be entitled to any interest or right to the license, any annual charges, or any ownership of the Saint Lawrence-FDR Project.

### Release Language

- Releases and discharges the State, its political subdivisions, its citizens, inhabitants, the Power Authority of the State of New York and any successors from any claim which could be brought forward under federal and state law at the time of the execution of the settlement agreement